(e) The following steps have been taken to improve the stock position of wheat:—

(i) Increased procurement of wheat: Against 148 lakh tones in Rabi Marketing Season 2005-06, it is proposed to procure 162 lakh tones in the Rabi Marketing Season 2006-07.

(ii) The ratio of wheat and rice in the allocation of foodgrains to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families under TPDS has been rationalized and additional rice allocated keeping in view the food habits of States/UTs.

(iii) State Governments are being encouraged to procure more coarsegrains and also distribute the same under the TPDS.

(iv) Import of 5 lakh tones of what.

(v) Reduced allocation under Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National Food For Work (NFFW) programmes as well as under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) programme for 2006-07.

(vi) Proposal to reduce the scale of issue for APL, BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) households.

(f) The steps taken to procure more wheat as on today include planning the opening of more number of procurement centers for wheat in major States, sorting out the problems of the State agencies such as grant of advance subsidy, recommendation of adequate Cash Credit Limit for State agencies, planning for opening of procurement centres by Food Corporation of India (FCI) even in State undertaking decentralized procurement.

Diversion of cereals meant for PDS

1223. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cereals meant for PDS are openly being sold in the open market and the poor people are deprived of this facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken to control this malpractice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments wherein the Central Government is responsible for procurement of foodgrains (Rice & Wheat), storage and their transportation upto the Principal Distribution Centres of FCI and the State Governments are responsible for identification of beneficiaries, issue them ration cards and distribute foodgrains through a vast net work of 4.83 lakh Fair Price Shops scattered all over the country. In such a vast net-work chances of irregularities can not be ruled out. However whenever a complaint is received by the Central Government it is forwarded to the concerned State Government for investigations and necessary remedial action.

(c) The reform of the Public Distribution System to improve its efficiency, accountability and effectiveness is an ongoing process. Besides notification of the Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001, involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, model citizen's charter and deputation of task force teams to check irregularities and to inspect and monitor the TPDS and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, conferences of State Food Secretaries, State Food Ministers, meeting with All India Fair Price Shops Dealers Federation and a meeting with all the Members of Parliament was organized for strengthening of TPDS and to make th system more successful. Regional Conferences have been held with focus on the unique problems of the region and to facilitate strengthening of the TPDS in a manner, which may be relevant to the local environment. Innovative steps like issue of bar-coded coupons, involvement of self-help groups, particularly of women, setting up of vigilance committees at FPS level have been adopted by various state governments to ensure correct distribution of foodgrains.

Foodgrains stocks

1224. SHRI A. VAJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether foodgrain stocks fell down drastically during the year 2002 to the year, 2005;